

Practice Pad Kits

Here, we take a look at three manufacturers: Calato, Remo & Pearl. The practice pad sets are five-piece configurations; the Calato being reversible.

The Regal Tip/Calato 305PS kit (\$195) has four molded-plastic-shell pads with 8" opaque Mylar heads on one side with 3/4" foam underneath, and an 8" gum rubber disc adhered on the other side. The "bass drum" pad is a 4" square rubber block, permanently attached on a cross-beam at the frame.

The base frame is black-coated tubular steel shaped into a drum-like circle at the sides and bottom. At the bottom of the frame is a protruding lip for the mounting of a drum pedal. Also, the frame has two hollow spur legs welded on, angled a bit frontward to keep frame "creep" to a minimum. Inside these tubes are telescopic rubber-tipped legs, adjustable with a thumb screw.

At the top of the frame is a lightweight aluminum bar with four holes along its length. Three of these holes are used in the set-up; the other one is for an additional pad or cymbal holder. The bar is channeled underneath allowing square-head bolts to fit in; their posts protruding the top of the bar. The separate pad extrusion bars are slotted near their ends to correspond with the bolt posts, and fit in pairs: the snare drum and left tom-tom bars on one bolt, the right tom and floor tom on the other. The bars are set in place by threaded plastic knobs that screw down on the bolt post. Each bar can be adjusted 5" in any direction.

The other end of each extrusion bar is split with a single hole through which

passes the pad down post. The post tube is immobilized by a small wing bolt. The snare and floor tom legs are height-adjustable for balancing of the set. They are rubber-tipped and tightened with a thumb screw.

At the top of each post is the pad holder, which resembles a miniature snare drum holder. It has three movable arms and it screw-connects to a tilter on the post tube. (All pad holders are removable and will fit any regular cymbal-stand tilter.) The drum pad itself fits into the tri-arms, and there you have it.

A cymbal post tube and its extrusion bar fit into the last hole on the frame bar. The tube has a standard "C"-style titler, felt washer, and is 21" in height. Even at its maximum height, though, it still isn't tall enough to get a ride cymbal up and away from the tom-tom pad.

All pad post tubes are adjustable for height and distance, as is the cymbal holder. I like the way of pad mounting that Calato has employed—it's quick and easy, with no threads to strip.

The four pads are tensionable on the mylar head side, using eight slotted screws. The head itself is permanently mounted in the top half of the pad frame. If it breaks, it seems you're out of luck.

Being reversible, the Calato pads offer two different sounds. The Mylar side has more attack to it; the rubber side is quieter and responds with some pitch.

Remo's *RPSIOT* (\$146.50) has five pads and a cymbal holder. The Remo pads vary in size: 6" for the bass drum, two 8" pads for the small toms, and two 10" pads for the snare and floor tom. The

frame is more simple than Calato's, having one 3" wide anodized center support. The bass drum pad is mounted near the top of the support. Beneath this support block is a 12" long base plate with two adjustable thumb-screw spurs. The base plate provides for pedal mounting, though I found it's a bit thicker than the Calato and has a hard time taking on some pedals.

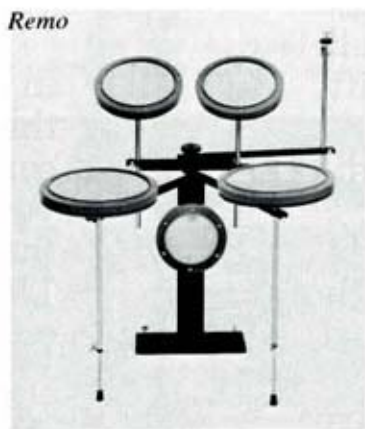
In Remo's case, all five extrusion bars fit atop one another on the support block. The bars are slotted and all fit on a threaded post, set with a massive knob adjuster. (Beware of this knob—if you tighten it too much and then try to loosen it, you'll hurt your hands!)

The pad posts fit through split holes in the extrusions same as the Calato, and are tightened in place by fat T-handles and bolts. The snare and floor-tom posts have telescopic rubber-tipped legs. All pads are tiltable and adjustable for height and spread. Each pad has a threaded hole underneath, allowing the pads to be screwed onto the tilter posts, and rest on large metal washers. The pads are also backed with rubber rings for non-skid use on tabletops, etc.

Genuine coated Remo heads are fitted to the pads (in this case, replaceable), and are tuneable with slotted screws. These heads seem to be more durable than Calato's, and the coating gives better response when using brushes, even though it's difficult to practice brushwork on a 10" pad.

The cymbal holder included here is

continued on page 41



only 12" long, which is *much* too short. I wish both Remo and Calato would consider lengthening their cymbal posts.

Remo also makes a stabilizer pad available: a 20" x 28" piece of fiberboard with a grip surface.

New to the market are Pearl's TD-5 Training Drums (\$285). Not as compact as the Remo and Calato, the Pearl pads have their own separate stands. The stands have a tripod base and one height-adjustable tier with a "C"-style tilter. The two "small tom-tom" pads mount on a single stand. They can only tilt as a pair, but are separately adjustable for span. The bass drum pad is mounted on a stand-up post which is braced at the back. The post is bolted to a metal platform that has two sprung spur points, and a rubber strip underneath to assist the pedal's grip when mounted on. Also included with the TD-5 set-up is a ribbed rubber stabilizer floor mat. There is no cymbal holder included.

The bass and small toms use 8" pads; the snare and floor tom use 10" pads. All the pads have regular pressed-metal hoops like a real drum, standard tension rods (not slotted screws like the others), and are fitted with coated heads (although not as rough as Remo's). They have black-enameled metal bottoms and are filled with two foam layers—one light and one dense. The pads mount on the tilter screw posts like the Remo set-up.

The pads do not have as much of an attack sound as the Remo and Calato pads do. The idea of separate stands is a big plus for duplicating your set-up exactly. Even though the price is a bit much, the Pearl is perhaps the sturdiest of all the kits. Response is very much like a regular drum kit, aided by the real hoops which help for a realistic rim shot "feel."

Of all three practice pad kits tested, the Calato, when used with its rubber sides, is the quietest, followed in order by Pearl, then Remo, with the Calato plastic side being the loudest. One problem with all of these kits is that when playing the bass drum pad, you will transmit some degree of vibration and 'thump' to your downstairs neighbor. Perhaps someone can devise some sort of isolation mount for the pedal and frame.

These kits won't feel *exactly* like a drum, since there is no air being moved. However, the Pearl TD-5 has the best bass drum sound and feel, and, as I said, the real rims on their pads help to make the kit more realistic than the others.

The concept of practice pad kits is to enable the drummer to practice comfortably without bothering neighbors, parents, and so on. Even though, in all truth, there is nothing like a real drum kit, practice pad kits *are* a much-needed thing.



Under My Skins

JUST FOR YOU

BY REQUEST

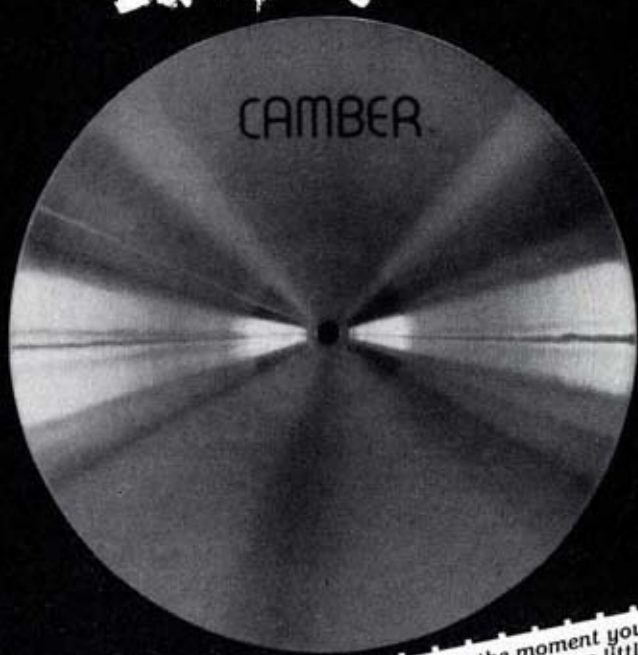
We've designed this original T-shirt in **VIVID COLORS**, artistically blended making this **SILK-SCREEN PRINTED SHIRT** a true 3-D work of art.

EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE DRUMMER

Available in Lt. Blue, Yellow & Sand. Sizes S, M, L & XL. For yours send \$7.95 & \$1.00 ea. post. & handlg. (U.S. funds only). (Fla. res. add 4% sales tax).

To: HURDY GURDY PRODUCTIONS
 Box 17080, Dept. #D3-4, Plantation, Fla. 33318-7080
 ★ MONEY BACK GUARANTEE ★

Cymbals with a striking difference



They're from Camber. And the difference will be obvious the moment you strike them. Camber Brass, Nickel-Silver and Bronze Cymbals are a little brighter, a little crisper and create better tone quality that Cuts Through even in a crowd of sound. Each Camber Cymbal has a unique Nomar finish that prevents finger and strike marks from marring its natural beauty.

Enjoy the feeling of total percussion control. Whatever your cymbal requirements . . . rock, fusion jazz, new wave or symphonic. . . remember Camber Cuts Through. Send for your free booklet "How to Choose A Cymbal" along with our catalog of Camber Cymbals and Accessories.

Name _____ Zip _____

Street _____ State _____ City _____ MD 782

City _____ Music Store _____

CAMBER CYMBAL
 101 Horton Ave., Lynbrook, N.Y. 11563